

# A PAGE FOR WOMEN AND THE HOME

## THE DAILY SHORT STORY

### LOVE AND CONTEST.

BY JANE OSBORN.

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THE woodthrushes were singing their evening song on the elms that surrounded and looked down upon the low-eaved farmhouse. But Metty Cramer did not hear them. To be sure, she was spending her usual after-supper hour on the "front stoop," but her thoughts were far from the songbirds. Farmer Cramer and his wife, weary by the monotonous duties of the day, rocked back and forth in the twilight. Metty sat bolt upright on the top step of the porch and stared out ahead of her into the shadow.

Open on her lap was the latest issue of The Hearst Companion. She had been reading it until the shadows began to fall too heavily beneath the trees and now she merely sat and thought of what she had read. The magazine was open at the editorial pages and there, in large black-faced type, one might have seen these words: "Our Heart Problem Contest." Below this heading the editor of the magazine had announced the plans of a new prize contest.

"If you have a heart problem, we want you to write and tell us about it. Prizes will be awarded for the best letter and as many of the other letters as possible will receive personal answers with advice from one of our editors."

Then the editor went on to explain that the first prize would be the neat sum of one hundred dollars, and he further explained the beauties of the parlor lamp, egg beaters, condensed-milk-can holders and other interesting articles that were to be distributed among the others whose letters were deemed of especial interest.

Metty was indifferent to these trifles, and even the check for one hundred dollars didn't interest her especially. "As many of the letters as possible will receive personal answers from the editors." These words were the ones that clung to her inward eye and caused her to sit and stare so intently into the growing shadows. Even if there were only a small possibility that her letter might be answered she would venture it.

As she rose from the step she was too intent on her project to see the tall, erect, though muscle-weary figure of Si Larned, as he came from his last duties in the barn, through the shadow of the house. Si enjoyed the distinction of being the one and only "hired man" on the Cramer farm, a position which he alternately regarded as his greatest curse or his fondest blessing, all of which depended on the degree of cordiality in Metty's smile.

Metty stole quietly to her father's desk and took from it the sole bottle of ink which the Cramer establishment boasted, and with this and her father's pen in hand she ascended to her own room, there to work out her problem, as she regarded it. Meantime Si sank down on the porch step. It was good to hear the birds in their last low song, and Si filled his lungs full of the fragrance of the honey-suckle that wound its way around the posts of the small porch. But he caught sight of the flutter of Metty's skirt as she went into the house and his peace of mind was turned to regret. Why had Metty avoided him? he asked himself, and then he answered this question to his own satisfaction. "Of course, she wouldn't look at 'hired help' like me," he told himself. "Some city man will come along for her and then she won't look at me."

Si didn't reflect, as he might have done, that although a "hired" man at present, he was learning valuable lessons in his vocation, and that already he had won some little local reputation for the size of the potato crops

## PRETTY FACE MAKES GIRL THE HIGHEST SALARIED MODEL IN THE COUNTRY!



Mae Burns

No foreign prince ever called Mae Burns the prettiest girl in America, but a few years ago she discovered she wasn't altogether bad looking and decided her face would be her fortune.

that he managed to grow on Farmer Cramer's outworn soil.

He thought he might be able to see Metty if he went into the house, so, absent-mindedly picking up the magazine where Metty had left it, he rose, passed the elder Cramers where they sat with a weary, "I'm off to bed now; good night," and made his way into the sitting room.

Metty wasn't there, so the next best thing that occurred to him to do was to read the new number of The Hearst Companion. Si's custom always was to begin at the beginning and to continue thus till he had read to the end—a system of thoroughness that, applied to agriculture, probably accounted for his more than usual success with Cramer's land.

On the first page of the magazine beyond the frontispiece he came to the editorial, and, with keen attention to every word, he labored through it. Then he sat for a few minutes staring meditatively into the stove-hole at the side of the room, and then, cautiously, he went to Cramer's desk and took out a pencil, delved into the woodbox for a piece of discarded wrapping paper and started toward the door with the magazine under his arm.

At the turn of the stairs he ran into Metty—Metty tiptoeing down stairs in her pink worsted slippers and Japanese crepe kimono and her light-brown hair luxuriously spreading over her graceful shoulders. He had never before seen Metty thus, and Metty, from surprise, uttered a little cry. "I didn't know you were here," she said, holding the folds of her kimono high at the neck. "I came downstairs for the magazine. I wanted to finish a story I was reading. I am very sorry." And in another minute she was back in her room and Si was still standing on the stairs gazing up whither the little pink worsted slippers and the flutter of the figured Japanese crepe had vanished.

"I wanted to look over that story

again." Si mused, "but I guess I can write the letter in rough first and then have a look at the magazine again tomorrow."

It was a month later and neither Metty nor Si had received the answer to the problem that confronted them, although each had watched faithfully for the mail man. Then came The Hearst Companion, and, as Mr. Cramer had overtaken the mail carrier on his way back from the village that morning, he had come into possession of the magazine first.

"I guess you want to get a look at the new fashions," he told Metty as he came into the house, and passing it to her, he turned to Si, who had come in from the fields for his midday dinner. "Here, Si, here's a letter from the magazine folks. I guess they want you to subscribe to their magazine. And, by gravity, if there isn't a letter for Metty, too! Those fellows don't seem to care how they use their postage stamps to send all those letters to one house the same day in different envelopes. Seems to me as if one stamp would have carried them all."

Si opened his letter hurriedly without excusing himself, and his strong, unburned hand was fairly shaking with emotion and surprise when he took out an oblong of white paper on which was written an order for one hundred dollars, payable to Si Larned. "We take great pleasure in announcing to you that your letter has been awarded the first prize in our 'heart problem' contest," it ran. "As you see, we are publishing it without your name, as agreed, in this month's edition of the magazine. By way of giving you the help and advice we promised, we wish to attract your attention to the letter published under the tenth place in the contest."

While Metty was still reading her letter—which announced that she had won a new patent vegetable press as a reward for having the tenth best letter, Si grasped the magazine which she had laid on the table. He turned past his own letter—which was published exactly as he had written it, save for the omission of his name—and passed on till he came to the tenth letter. Could this really have been written by Metty?

"I have not the slightest hope of winning a prize," the letter ran after giving a more or less minute autobiographical sketch. "My only wish in writing is that some one wiser than myself might give me advice. I am an uneducated farmer's daughter. My problem is not one of stifled ambition. No, I do not want to be a Red Cross nurse, and I do not want to go to college. My problem is the old, old problem. I love a young man who works for my father. I think I could make him love me if I could only live in different surroundings. I love the country life, but I believe he has ambitions. I know I could never be happy anywhere but in this or some similar secluded spot. My heart problem is this: Since I cannot be happy

in the way that would correspond to this man's ambitions, have I any right to make him love me? And since in his eyes I must be a simple country girl, how could I make him love me anyway?"

Then, with excitement such as he had never felt before in his life, Si turned to the first page and saw his own letter printed at the head of them all. It was the simply written, direct outpourings of the man who loved the country, the man who had an innate passion for the soil that left no room in his heart for city ambitions. The problem he presented was this: The woman he loved must needs regard him as a boor and clout because he was working as her father's hired man, and in order to win her love he felt it was necessary to break away from the things he loved and make a way for himself in the city. Then he could make her admire him. But in the meantime he would be miserably out of his element. What should he do?

So intent had Si been in reading first the letter and then the magazine that he did not realize that Metty was at his side, reading the pages over his shoulder. Metty's mother had left the room to get the dinner things and her father was in the hall pulling off his boots.

"Were you writing the gospel truth, Metty?" he asked, putting rough, muscular hands on her shoulders. "If you were just writing that for fun, tell me!"

"I meant every word of it," she said, and then as her father shambled back into the room, she whispered: "I wonder if we should ever have known if it hadn't been for the heart-problem contest?"

## ANOTHER GOOD DAVIS STORY.

Look out for the third in the series of Richard Harding Davis' stories printed in the Magazine Section of The New York Sunday World. It is entitled "Billy and the Big Stick" and appears in the issue of The Sunday World of August 27. The remarkable detective story of Inspector Froest, of Scotland Yard, called "The Maelstrom," will begin in the Magazine Section of The Sunday World of September 10. You cannot afford to miss these literary treats. Order your Sunday World early from your news-dealer.—Adv.

## WIDOWS AND ORPHANS IN CASE THAT MAY CAUSE A "WAR AFTER THE WAR" IN EUROPE!



The picture shows the widow and seven orphan children of Captain Fryatt, in circle, commander of the British merchant liner Brussels, whose

death, at the hands of the German government, has aroused England to the extent that the claim is being made the British will not resume diplomatic relations with Germany even after the war. Fryatt was taken by the Germans after he attempted their claim, to ram a submarine. He was put to death. English officials argue he should have been treated as a prisoner of war. The Germans claim Fryatt committed piracy.

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cers of the Grand Lodge of Knights of Pythias of West Virginia yesterday officiated at the ceremonies attending the laying of the corner stone of the new \$50,000 school building here. Thos. W. Fleming, of Fairmont, delivered the principal address. Samuel

B. Montgomery of Kingwood, grand keeper of records and seal, also delivered an address.

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## CONFESSIONS OF A WIFE

"After your trip to the sea shore with Eliene," Dick told me, "you and I will take a little holiday."

For the life of me, little book, I could not get up any enthusiasm about a trip and I said, "We will wait until I get perfectly well, Dick, before we make any plans."

"Yes, dear," he said, "I know I've got to win you all over again and I am going to do so. We'll put that second honeymoon trip as far in the future as you wish, but we will take it sometime just the same."

"Some way, the thought of the future tires me, Dick," I said. "It takes all my strength to live in the present. I seem to have forgotten the past except as a hazy dream and the future seems such a long way off that my soul grows tired as I contemplate the journey."

"Even when you give that weary little smile, Margie," said Dick, "it ripples all over your face and disappears behind your ears in the way I used to love. Margie, I can't tell you how I have missed that smile of yours since you have been ill."

That little speech of Dick's thrilled me, and I exclaimed:

"I am going to live again, to enjoy life riotously. I'm going to breathe through my eyes as well as my lungs. I'm going to take all the joy of this great world into my arms. I am literally going to feel the touch of it—the warmth of it."

Dick seemed a little frightened as he put a detaining hand on me, as if he thought I was going to fly out of bed.

"Here, my girl," he said, "don't you go too fast. You must try and be content to get well slowly."

"Content," I ejaculated scornfully. "I have tried to be content with just lying like a log so long. Trying to be content under adverse circumstances is living to the first of hell."

Dick bent over my bed, involuntarily I drew away, and the feeling that I could move blotted out every other sensation.

"Oh, Dick, Dick," I said almost hysterically. "Don't you see that I am moving?"

"Yes, dear, I see that you are moving away from me," he said rather scornfully. "But I am going to make you love me all over again."

"And you are going to love me all over again?" I asked maliciously.

"I have never ceased to love you, dear."

Now, little book, can you beat that? Aren't men the queerest things alive? I really believe Dick thinks he has always loved me.

Do you think, little book, that my year of being just a log, when I have had to suppress every emotion, has taken from me the power of loving?

## DOINGS OF THE DUFFS—(PALM BEACH SUITS DON'T CARE WHO WEARS THEM.)—BY ALLMAN.

